

Taking Stock & Moving Forward on Futures:

Thoughts & some suggestions from Larry Lewack - 2.24.06

'Big Picture' Challenges:

1. Need to re-assess match between original Futures assumptions & current realities, esp. re:
 - Impact of 'Global Commitment' to IMD issue
 - Pursuit of VSH recertification & its impact on overall timeline
2. Confront fallout from Vergennes & Greensboro debacles. What it will take to prevent this dynamic from repeating itself? There is a growing public & legislative perception that we're not doing our homework & don't have answers to basic operational questions.
3. Are we so focused on the big 'bricks & mortar' projects that we're failing to pursue opportunities for incremental reform in smaller settings? E.g. what is 'Plan B' for the FAHC proposal, & to advance residential recovery model?
4. Need to re-assess emergent models, in light of needs of **actual VSH patients now**. E.g. What community programs need to be in place to help specific current/likely VSH patients move out of VSH in next 18 months? What will it take to get these capacities up & running? & who's pursuing this agenda, with what support from DMH & from us?

Process Challenges for the Futures Project:

1. Infrequent A.G. meetings w/ insufficient opportunity for full group to digest, debate & refine good work coming out of committees. Drafts & other key documents not circulated in advance of meetings.
2. Need for skilled facilitation; DMH staff have too much at stake to be neutral facilitators.

What would help move us forward?

1. More cohesive anti-stigma messages from all of us & from VT's policy leaders
2. More nuanced process for advancing res. recovery projects (AD's 'straw man' outline)
3. Clear info from DAs & hospitals on what enhancement resources they need now to offer programs that build on what's already in place, to transition VSH patients successfully back into our communities
4. Building on 'what works' from other states—are we really using what's out there?
5. Less smoke & more light from VSEA reps & others w/ axes to grind. Willingness to publicly support what we've produced together & stick our collective necks out.